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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION Q NORTH KOREA - TOKYO

11. LEAD STORIES: All Friday morning papers front-paged the early-morning passage in the Diet's Lower House of two pension-related bills.

12. "G-8 Foreign Ministerial at Potsdam: Strengthen Ties to Deal with DPRK" The top-circulation, moderate Yomiuri editorialized (6/1): "...Foreign ministers from the G-8 nations, meeting in Potsdam, Germany, agreed that their nations would work together to realize North Korea's denuclearization and resolve issues over its abductions of foreign nationals. Will this G-8 agreement apply pressure on Pyongyang? What should be done to make G-8 cooperation stronger and even closer? At the foreign ministerial, FM Aso said that Japan's patience was not limitless, and that we should not shy away from stepping up pressure on North Korea. Aso's remarks were a matter of course, given that the North has yet to implement the 'initial steps' toward denuclearization. The question, however, is what the other members of the G-8 will do, as their positions are different.... Although it is important to urge the North to abandon its nuclear programs at the six-party talks, Japan has become anxious about a perception gap among the parties negotiating with the DPRK. For example, the US is apparently inclined to attach more importance to nonproliferation than to Pyongyang's denuclearization. Japan is the country most exposed to the serious nuclear threat from North Korea, and as such it can hardly accept any move to recognize Pyongyang's possession of nuclear weapons as a fait accompli."

SCHIEFFER